

Macbeth 2.3

SCENE III. The same.

Knocking within. Enter a Porter

Porter

Here's a knocking indeed! If a
man were porter of hell-gate, he should have
old turning the key.

Knocking within

Knock,
knock, knock! Who's there, i' the name of
Beelzebub? Here's a farmer, that hanged
himself on the expectation of plenty: come in
time; have napkins enow about you; here
you'll sweat for't.

Knocking within

Knock,
knock! Who's there, in the other devil's
name? Faith, here's an equivocator, that could
swear in both the scales against either scale;
who committed treason enough for God's sake,
yet could not equivocate to heaven: O, come
in, equivocator.

Knocking within

Knock,

knock, knock! Who's there? Faith, here's an
English tailor come hither, for stealing out of
a French hose: come in, tailor; here you may
roast your goose.

Knocking within

Knock,
knock; never at quiet! What are you? But
this place is too cold for hell. I'll devil-porter
it no further: I had thought to have let in
some of all professions that go the primrose
way to the everlasting bonfire.

Knocking within

Anon, anon! I pray you, remember the porter.

Opens the gate

Enter MACDUFF and LENNOX

MACDUFF

Was it so late, friend, ere you went to bed,
That you do lie so late?

Porter

'Faith sir, we were carousing till the
second cock: and drink, sir, is a great
provoker of three things.

MACDUFF

What three things does drink especially provoke?

Porter

Marry, sir, nose-painting, sleep, and
urine. Lechery, sir, it provokes, and unprovokes;
it provokes the desire, but it takes
away the performance: therefore, much drink
may be said to be an equivocator with lechery:
it makes him, and it mars him; it sets
him on, and it takes him off; it persuades him,
and disheartens him; makes him stand to, and
not stand to; in conclusion, equivocates him
in a sleep, and, giving him the lie, leaves him.

MACDUFF

I believe drink gave thee the lie last night.

Porter

That it did, sir, i' the very throat on
me: but I requited him for his lie; and, I
think, being too strong for him, though he took
up my legs sometime, yet I made a shift to cast
him.

MACDUFF

Is thy master stirring?

Enter MACBETH

Our knocking has awaked him; here he comes.

LENNOX

Good morrow, noble sir.

MACBETH

Good morrow, both.

MACDUFF

Is the king stirring, worthy thane?

MACBETH

Not yet.

MACDUFF

He did command me to call timely on him:

I have almost slipp'd the hour.

MACBETH

I'll bring you to him.

MACDUFF

I know this is a joyful trouble to you;

But yet 'tis one.

MACBETH

The labour we delight in physics pain.

This is the door.

MACDUFF

I'll make so bold to call,

For 'tis my limited service.

Exit

LENNOX

Goes the king hence to-day?

MACBETH

He does: he did appoint so.

LENNOX

The night has been unruly: where we lay,

Our chimneys were blown down; and, as they say,

Lamentings heard i' the air; strange screams of death,
And prophesying with accents terrible
Of dire combustion and confused events
New hatch'd to the woeful time: the obscure bird
Clamour'd the livelong night: some say, the earth
Was feverous and did shake.

MACBETH

'Twas a rough night.

LENNOX

My young remembrance cannot parallel
A fellow to it.

Re-enter MACDUFF

MACDUFF

O horror, horror, horror! Tongue nor heart
Cannot conceive nor name thee!

MACBETH LENNOX

What's the matter.

MACDUFF

Confusion now hath made his masterpiece!
Most sacrilegious murder hath broke ope
The Lord's anointed temple, and stole thence
The life o' the building!

MACBETH

What is 't you say? the life?

LENNOX

Mean you his majesty?

MACDUFF

Approach the chamber, and destroy your sight

With a new Gorgon: do not bid me speak;

See, and then speak yourselves.

Exeunt MACBETH and LENNOX

Awake, awake!

Ring the alarum-bell. Murder and treason!

Banquo and Donalbain! Malcolm! awake!

Shake off this downy sleep, death's counterfeit,

And look on death itself! up, up, and see

The great doom's image! Malcolm! Banquo!

As from your graves rise up, and walk like sprites,

To countenance this horror! Ring the bell.

Bell rings

Enter LADY MACBETH

LADY MACBETH

What's the business,

That such a hideous trumpet calls to parley

The sleepers of the house? speak, speak!

MACDUFF

O gentle lady,

'Tis not for you to hear what I can speak:

The repetition, in a woman's ear,

Would murder as it fell.

Enter BANQUO

O Banquo, Banquo,

Our royal master 's murder'd!

LADY MACBETH

Woe, alas!

What, in our house?

BANQUO

Too cruel any where.

Dear Duff, I prithee, contradict thyself,

And say it is not so.

Re-enter MACBETH and LENNOX, with ROSS

MACBETH

Had I but died an hour before this chance,

I had lived a blessed time; for, from this instant,

There 's nothing serious in mortality:

All is but toys: renown and grace is dead;

The wine of life is drawn, and the mere lees

Is left this vault to brag of.

Enter MALCOLM and DONALBAIN

DONALBAIN

What is amiss?

MACBETH

You are, and do not know't:

The spring, the head, the fountain of your blood

Is stopp'd; the very source of it is stopp'd.

MACDUFF

Your royal father 's murder'd.

MALCOLM

O, by whom?

LENNOX

Those of his chamber, as it seem'd, had done 't:

Their hands and faces were an badged with blood;

So were their daggers, which unwiped we found

Upon their pillows:

They stared, and were distracted; no man's life

Was to be trusted with them.

MACBETH

O, yet I do repent me of my fury,

That I did kill them.

MACDUFF

Wherefore did you so?

MACBETH

Who can be wise, amazed, temperate and furious,

Loyal and neutral, in a moment? No man:

The expedition my violent love

Outrun the pauser, reason. Here lay Duncan,

His silver skin laced with his golden blood;

And his gash'd stabs look'd like a breach in nature

For ruin's wasteful entrance: there, the murderers,

Steep'd in the colours of their trade, their daggers

Unmannerly breech'd with gore: who could refrain,

That had a heart to love, and in that heart

Courage to make 's love known?

LADY MACBETH

Help me hence, ho!

MACDUFF

Look to the lady.

MALCOLM

[Aside to DONALBAIN] Why do we hold our tongues,

That most may claim this argument for ours?

DONALBAIN

[Aside to MALCOLM] What should be spoken here,

where our fate,

Hid in an auger-hole, may rush, and seize us?

Let 's away;

Our tears are not yet brew'd.

MALCOLM

[Aside to DONALBAIN] Nor our strong sorrow

Upon the foot of motion.

BANQUO

Look to the lady:

LADY MACBETH is carried out

And when we have our naked frailties hid,

That suffer in exposure, let us meet,

And question this most bloody piece of work,

To know it further. Fears and scruples shake us:

In the great hand of God I stand; and thence

Against the undivulged pretence I fight

Of treasonous malice.

MACDUFF

And so do I.

ALL

So all.

MACBETH

Let's briefly put on manly readiness,

And meet i' the hall together.

ALL

Well contented.

Exeunt all but Malcolm and Donalbain.

MALCOLM

What will you do? Let's not consort with them:

To show an unfelt sorrow is an office

Which the false man does easy. I'll to England.

DONALBAIN

To Ireland, I; our separated fortune

Shall keep us both the safer: where we are,

There's daggers in men's smiles: the near in blood,

The nearer bloody.

MALCOLM

This murderous shaft that's shot

Hath not yet lighted, and our safest way

Is to avoid the aim. Therefore, to horse;

And let us not be dainty of leave-taking,

But shift away: there's warrant in that theft

Which steals itself, when there's no mercy left.

Exeunt